

Chicago association of commerce--Special
committee on the condition and affairs of
The University of Illinois

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

of

The Chicago Association of Commerce


on the

CONDITIONS AND AFFAIRS

of the

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Urbana-Champaign, Ill.



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YOUR committee, appointed to inspect the conditions and affairs of the University of Illinois and lend the support of the Association to the budget to be laid before the legislature for its maintenance and development, begs leave to report as follows:

We have examined into the affairs of the University as fully and carefully as time and opportunity would permit and have given consideration to its present condition and future needs. Two members of your committee have visited the institution and have consulted with various officers and members of its staff. We have also examined the annual report of the Comptroller for the year ending June 30, 1920, and several statements issued by the President of the University describing its present difficulties and setting forth the financial plan for the coming biennium.

Like all citizens of Illinois who have not been previously acquainted with the University, we have been very greatly impressed both by the magnitude of the institution and the diverse character and excellence of the services which it is rendering the people of the State. It is a matter of surprise to us that so many of our fellow citizens are but little, if at all, acquainted with the greatness of this institution, and its high standing among the educational and scientific institutions not only of the country, but of the world. Some means should be devised to bring the University before the people so frequently that at least a majority of our fellow citizens would have some adequate idea of what it is and what it does. For, as a former Governor once said, "The University is not merely a center of instruction where young men and women may prepare themselves for efficient citizenship, but it is also an important center for scientific investigation, in which significant and far-reaching contributions are constantly made towards the solution of problems concerning our agriculture, manufactures, and commerce." He might have added also towards the solution of some of our complex legislative and social problems.

Needless to say, an institution of the extent and diverse activity of a modern university, especially a state university, requires large and constantly increasing funds to prosecute its work. This is true not only because the number of young men and women seeking an education at the University is constantly increasing with population, but perhaps in a larger measure because the increasing complexity of the life of the State throws upon the University a demand for investigation into an increasing and multiferious complexity of technical, economic and social problems. Practically every interest of the State is calling upon the University for the solution of problems whose solution adds to the general welfare. As will be indicated later, the solution of these problems returns to the State, even from an economic point of view, far more than their investigation costs, so that money expended on the research side of the institution is properly regarded as an investment yielding direct returns. It goes without saying that the training of our men and women is an investment of even a more important character although its economic returns are less direct.

The Physical University

Considered as a physical plant, the University of Illinois has two great divisions. The main University is located at Urbana on the border line between that city and Champaign, so that it is equally well described as being located for railroad, telegraph, and express purposes, at either Urbana or Champaign. The other great division of the University, comprising the College of Medicine, the College of Dentistry, and the School of Pharmacy, is located in Chicago in the neighborhood of the Cook County Hospital.

At Urbana the University has 60 buildings, 230 acres in its campus, and 991 acres in its farms. A considerable portion of the campus proper is taken up with experimental plots in agriculture, including floriculture, forestry, and other sub-divisions. As the University is in the heart of the corn belt, it is favorably situated for practical experimentation and demonstration of agricultural problems relating to corn production, but its agricultural work extends to every part of the State and to every large agricultural interest. When we

remember that agriculturally Illinois is more diverse than almost any other state of the Mississippi Valley, we appreciate the multitude of lines of experiment which the College of Agriculture and its Experiment Station must conduct.

Among the principal buildings are the Physics Laboratory, the Chemistry Laboratory, the Natural History Hall, the College of Commerce Building, the Educational Building, Engineering Hall, Ceramics Building, Laboratories of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, the Locomotive Testing Laboratory, the Transportation Building, the Agricultural Building, the Law Building, the Smith-Memorial Hall of Music and the Armory—the latter one of the largest and most complete buildings of its kind in the United States.

A further word about the Military Department may not be out of place. It is perhaps the largest and most important university military organization in the country. At present the work requires 103 cadet officers, and 14 United States Army officers, together with 100 enlisted men. Training is given to about 2,700 young men at the present time. Besides the training in infantry, training is also given in cavalry, artillery, signal corps, engineering corps, and aeronautics.

According to the Report of the Comptroller of the University for the year ending June 30, 1920, the original cost of the land owned by the University is \$1,079,315, and the original cost of the buildings, including cost of additions, is \$5,295,785. The present value of the land and buildings is probably much greater.

Some idea of the extent of the physical plant may be gained from the statement that the University supplies its own heat, light, steam, electricity, and water.

The Divisions and Work of the University

The work of the University may be divided into four or five different divisions, i. e., the usual under-graduate college teaching, although in many more subjects than some of the older institutions treat; the graduate work of training new faculty and executive staff, investigation and research, and extension work of various kinds.

As a teaching institution the University has eight colleges and four schools and several bureaus and divisions. The colleges are the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Agriculture, the College of Engineering, the College of Commerce, the College of Education, the College of Law, the College of Medicine which is in Chicago, and the College of Dentistry also in Chicago. The schools are the School of Library Science, the School of Music, the School of Pharmacy in Chicago, and the Graduate School. The bureaus and divisions are Military, Physical Education, and the Student Health Service.

The University has museums of Classical Art, Archaeology, European Culture, Natural History, and Oriental History, but it has no building in which these collections can be displayed.

The University as a Public Service Institution

Research and extension work are classed under this head. Research is conducted through three organizations, the Graduate School, the Engineering Experiment Station, and the Agricultural Experiment Station. The Graduate School is an organization of all departments of the University to train investigators and to conduct research in every line. The Agricultural Experiment Station is specifically devoted to agriculture, and its great work is too well known to need description. The Engineering Experiment Station was the first of the kind in the country, and its investigations are known for their great value.

The extension work of the University is limited but important. Members of the staff are called on to go to all parts of the State many times a year, and several men are going about for this purpose practically all the time.

Staff and Students

The total number of people required for the operation of the University, including the teaching and research staff, the administrative staff, the clerical staff, and employees of all kind, is 1,331. The educational staff numbers 861. The gross enrollment of the University for the academic year 1919-1920,

including the summer session, was 9,208. The gross enrollment for the current academic year will be over 10,000, including the summer session. The number present and seeking and receiving instruction in November of 1920 at one time, not including the summer session, was 8,262. Of these some 2,400 were in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; 1,700 in the College of Commerce; 1,600 in the College of Engineering; 1,100 in the College of Agriculture; 750 in the Chicago Departments, and the rest in smaller groups in the other colleges and schools.

Comparison With Other Institutions

The important part of the University is, of course, its men and women. In these days good teaching and research require more than ever expensive equipment. Ten years ago the Association of Commerce gave its influence to the promotion of the interests of the University so powerfully that the institution received a great impetus in the improvement of its equipment and in the increase of its operating income. At that time our institution was inferior to its leading competitors, both in its physical equipment and the means at its command for employing a proper staff. Although much has been accomplished in the intervening period, other institutions have also forged ahead, and the relative situation of our State institution today is not much improved over what it was eleven years ago. The needs of the development of the University have gone forward in the past decade by leaps and bounds. It is important, therefore, to compare the present status of the University of Illinois in certain respects with that of some of her sister institutions.

The heart of an educational institution is its library. In this respect the University of Illinois is much below the position which it should occupy. It must be remembered that the main University is down in the country where it is not possible for students and faculty to have access to great collections of books other than those which the University itself possesses. Comparative figures upon this subject are as follows:

Name of Institution	Total vols. within easy reach, incl. vols. in Univ. Lib.	Vols. in Univ. Library
Columbia	5,780,000	709,849
Harvard	4,312,000	1,940,600*
Chicago	2,477,500	570,849
Pennsylvania	2,265,500	481,190
Yale	1,425,500	1,253,830
California	1,039,000	392,682
Johns Hopkins	1,010,000	216,137
Minnesota	983,000	280,000
Michigan	885,000	413,666
Wisconsin	743,000	481,395†
Cornell	630,000	603,100
Princeton	532,000	429,286
Illinois	462,000 (Urbana only)	418,949

* Includes volumes and pamphlets in all departments.

† Includes Wisconsin State Hist. Library in same building.

The per capita student investment in buildings in several institutions is shown in the following table, and again it appears that Illinois is low, showing that the expense of maintaining the University of Illinois is, from this point of view, considerably less than that of other institutions:

Cost of Buildings, June 30, 1920, per Head of Student Enrollment November 1, 1920

University of Minnesota.....	\$832
*University of Iowa	747
University of Wisconsin.....	719
*University of Michigan.....	708
University of Illinois.....	642
†University of Ohio.....	427

* Agricultural College not included.

† Agricultural Experiment Station not included.

Per Capita Burden on the People for the Support of Universities

The following table shows the University income for 1920-21 per head of population for several states, the 1920 Census figures being taken for population:

	University	Agric. Coll.	Total
Wisconsin	\$1.14		\$1.14
Minnesota	1.38		1.38
Iowa .....	.77	\$0.55	1.32
Michigan .....	.80	.26	1.06
Ohio .....	.30	.25	.55
Indiana .....	.22	.26	.48
Illinois .....	.39		.39

That is to say, Michigan contributes more than twice as much, Wisconsin practically three times as much, and Minnesota and Iowa over three times as much per head as do the people of Illinois for the maintenance of the various lines of work done at our State University. In Michigan, Iowa, and Indiana the agricultural courses are given at separate institutions. In Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois they are given at the same place as the rest of the university work. In Ohio state appropriations to maintain the same work as is done at the University of Illinois are made to three institutions besides that at Columbus, namely, Ohio University at Athens, Miami University at Oxford, and the Agricultural Experiment Station at Wooster. In cases where the institutions are separate, appropriations to them are combined in order to make a fair comparison with Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois.

Income and Expenditures of the University

Largely as a result of the efforts of the Association of Commerce, the legislature passed in 1911 an Act whereby a tax of one mill on the assessed valuation of the taxable property of the State was assessed for University appropriations. This tax was reduced to two-thirds of a mill by amendment of the law in 1919. It was naturally supposed that such a tax would yield an increasing income from year to year as the wealth and assessed value of the property of the State increased. As a matter of fact, such has not been the case. The receipts of the University mill tax fund increased very much more slowly than either population or wealth. The annual receipts for the University from the mill tax fund were as follows:

1909-10	}	.....\$1,151,750	}	Direct appropriations out of Revenue
1910-11	}	..... 1,151,750	}	
1911-12	}	..... 1,692,150	}	
	}	..... 1,692,150	}	
	}	..... 2,250,000		
1914-15	}	..... 2,250,000		
1915-16		..... 2,424,870.95		
1916-17		..... 2,575,129.05		
1917-18		..... 2,333,263.58		
1918-19		..... 2,341,933.77		
1919-20	}	..... 2,500,000		
1920-21	}	..... 2,500,000		

Since 1911 the income from the mill tax for operation has increased only about 11 per cent. In the meantime the number of students actually present and receiving instruction at one time has increased more than 100 per cent. Meanwhile, the prices of everything have practically doubled. In other words, the operating income for the University from the mill tax has increased only about one-tenth as much as the number of the student body, and the cost of equipment and supplies has in the meantime increased 100 per cent.

The gross income of the University includes, however, not only receipts from the mill tax fund or State taxes, but also certain items from the United States, from student fees, and from sales and gifts. The University received last year (1919-20) from the Federal Government \$313,527. This includes the University's share of appropriations made by Congress for the promotion of agriculture and vocational education, \$261,000 of the whole going to the former account. This money, is therefore, not available for the ordinary work of the University.

From student fees the University collected in the last fiscal year \$353,683. From sales and miscellaneous sources, most of the proceeds going into the revolving funds mainly for the commercial departments of the College of Agriculture, \$377,500 were collected.

In addition to the mill tax appropriation the last legislature appropriated to the University a certain sum outside of the mill tax for building purposes. For a clinical laboratory at the College of Medicine \$300,000 was given and for cavalry stables at Urbana, \$25,000.

The total income, therefore, of the University from all sources for all purposes for the year ending June 30, 1920, was \$3,916,249.

The Business Organization of the University

Business men are inclined to raise questions about the efficiency of the business organization and methods of educational institutions. We have examined into the business organization of the University of Illinois. At the head is the Comptroller of the University. Under him is an Assistant Comptroller, a Bursar, an Auditor, and a Purchasing Agent. Each of the three latter has assistants, with the necessary number of clerks, stenographers, and bookkeepers, the total number in the staff being thirty-six. In addition, there is a Treasurer appointed by the Board of Trustees, and recently the office of Superintendent of Business Operations has been created, the duty of the incumbent being to keep the President informed on the efficiency of the business operations of all departments of the University.

All expenditures are made on requisitions duly approved by several officers; all purchases are made through the Purchasing Agent, standard articles largely in use being bought in quantities, and purchases exceeding \$100 are let by contract after competition. Such articles as require expert judgment are bought by or on advice of the experts of the University, acting as agents of the Purchasing Agent and the Comptroller, under regular procedure and due authority. Monthly reports are made by the Comptroller and the Treasurer, and quarterly financial reports are published in the minutes of the Board of Trustees. Quarterly audits are also made by a Chicago firm of accountants. The Comptroller of the University is himself a Certified Public Accountant. The rules of the Board of Trustees regulating expenditures have

been examined by us and we think that these and the organization are adequate to insure careful expenditure and to prevent waste and inefficient operation. All employees who handle money are under bond.

Present Conditions at the University

The difficulties under which the University is laboring in carrying on its work have been set forth in circulars issued by the President of the University during the past twelve months. In these circulars attention is called particularly to the following points:

Two years ago a building was erected for the College of Education. Owing to the lack of funds it has not been equipped and a staff has not been employed.

Salaries have been and are in many cases too small, so that it has been difficult and at times impossible to secure properly qualified teachers.

In the meantime, the research work in agriculture, engineering, and other lines has been seriously curtailed. It should be remembered in this connection that the contributions made directly to the people through its research undoubtedly are many fold the total appropriations which the University has received from its establishment. Only recently was the University able to announce that it had developed a new variety of wheat which has, on a five-year average, outyielded other varieties by six bushels to the acre. When we remember that nearly two and a half million acres were planted to wheat in Illinois last year, we can get some idea of what this means to the farmers of this State.

The extension work of the University has also been diminished.

Classes are too large to teach properly. This fall there were being conducted 838 classes, each larger than the standard number of 25. Of the total, 357 had in them 35 students enrolled and 135 had in them 50 each.

The Chicago Departments

Probably few members of the Association and undoubtedly a still smaller proportion of the citizens of Chicago know that an important part of the work of the University is carried on in the city of Chicago. As already stated, this is the work in medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. But it is conducted under conditions which make it impossible for the men in charge to do their best, and with a lack of buildings and other equipment which have made it impossible for the University in its medical and dental departments to take a place in the front rank of institutions doing such work. The buildings used by the College of Medicine and the College of Dentistry are old and out of date, expensive to maintain, hard to keep clean, and in a large measure unsuited to the work. The opportunity for the promotion of the welfare of the people of the State in matters of health and sanitation is practically unlimited. The means provided to take advantage of that opportunity are pitiful. The equipment available for the first two years of work of the medical courses are fairly good, and the staff for this scientific work is of a high order. The equipment for the clinical work in medicine is wholly lacking, and the University has to depend upon facilities put at its disposal by members of its clinical faculty who have connections with hospitals in the city and who in return for their connection with the College place these hospital facilities at its disposal. The State, through its University, should own and control its own hospitals. Unless immediate steps are taken to supply the proper clinical facilities to the College of Medicine of the University of Illinois and to supply better facilities for its College of Dentistry, the University may as well close those departments. Fortunately, for the good name of the State, and its educational interest in medicine and dentistry, the Department of Public Welfare of the State saw the opportunity to promote the health and welfare of the people by establishing in co-operation with the University a great group of State hospitals. An arrangement

was made between the Department of Public Welfare and the University whereby the Department is to erect a group of hospitals in Chicago which offer clinical facilities to the University College of Medicine, while the University is to erect adjacent thereto and on State land research laboratories, libraries, and classrooms to be used and operated in connection with the clinical hospitals. It is one of the greatest plans ever conceived for medical education and research in the promotion of public health. The attention of every citizen of Chicago should be directed to this great project which is described in some detail by the Dean of the College of Medicine and the Director of Public Welfare in a recent number of *The Modern Hospital*. Land has been purchased and the foundations laid for several of these buildings. The advance in the cost of construction has made it impossible to finish those projected for this biennium. The project will require for its completion appropriations aggregating \$2,500,000, and the budgets of the Department of Public Welfare and the University will make provision for further work. The members of this Association should acquaint themselves with this project and lend it their support.

Legislative Budget

To meet the needs of the University, the Board of Trustees has decided to lay before the legislature a budget calling for \$5,250,000 a year from the State for all purposes. The Trustees propose that \$4,000,000 per year be appropriated for operation, maintenance, equipment, and certain extensions, \$2,500,000 of which will come from the existing two-thirds of a mill tax and \$1,500,000 per year from general revenue.

They further propose an appropriation of \$250,000 a year for each year of the biennium for the specific purpose of starting a new group of agricultural buildings, and a further appropriation of \$1,000,000 per year during the next biennium for other buildings that should be started within that period to meet the University's growing needs.

In addition to the foregoing the Board of Trustees will ask for legislation changing somewhat the present financial policy with reference to the University. In the first place, it will request that the tax rate be made one mill on the dollar of assessed valuation as it used to be instead of two-thirds of a mill as at present. If this is done, the annual income from that source will be approximately \$4,000,000, the amount the Trustees are requesting for operation and maintenance for each year of the next biennium.

In order to make it possible for the University to have a continuous policy with reference to building, the Board will ask the legislature to pass an additional tax levy of one-fourth of a mill, which as above stated, is to be sought for the next two years through specific appropriations for that purpose, to provide the \$1,000,000 per year for the building needs of the University.

Your Committee's Recommendations

The most careful study which we have been able to give this whole matter convinces us that conditions at the University are far short of what they should be because of inadequate financial support. We believe that the requests for appropriations and changes in the mill tax law which the Board has decided to lay before the legislature are reasonable and should be granted. We are of the opinion that the amount of money asked for is reasonable, and can be readily justified. It is considerably below that which is being requested by the universities of several other states, whose student enrollments are less than that of Illinois. The sum in the aggregate is not large for a state of the population and wealth of Illinois. The proposed budget calls for an appropriation of \$4,000,000 per year for operation, maintenance, etc., as against \$2,500,000 now secured, an increase of only 60 per cent instead of the large amount which the doubling of the student body and the reduced purchasing power of the dollar would seem to call for.



We are informed that this moderate increase has been asked because of the anticipation of a gradual lowering of inflated values and reduction of the cost of living. The larger part of the money for operation will go into wages and salaries of new and existing positions, and for supplies, and a 60 per cent increase for these purposes seems not unreasonable.

Your committee, therefore, recommends that The Chicago Association of Commerce again take active part before the appropriations committees of the legislature in furthering the interests of the University by urging that the financial plan of the Trustees be adopted as submitted.

(Signed) WILLIAM P. SIDLEY, Chairman,
AUGUSTUS S. PEABODY,
C. M. MODERWELL,
FREDERICK H. SCOTT.

Approved March 4, 1921

Executive Committee

The Chicago Association of Commerce